



REVIEW ARTICLE

Efficacy of *Triphala Rasayana* – A Review

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received on: 06-06-2023

Accepted on: 17-08-2023

Available online: 31-08-2023

Key words:

Amalaki,
Haritaki,
Rasayana,
Tridoshika,
Triphala,
Vibhitaki

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Even after increasing urbanization, *Ayurveda* remains the classical and comprehensive part of ancient medicine system for well-being promotive diseases, preventive, and revival approach for human body. Conventionally, *rasayana*-based formulation is utilized in different types of diseases as well as to restore the health of an individual. *Triphala Rasayana* as mentioned in Ayurvedic classics comprised of *Amalaki*, *Vibhitaki*, and *Haritaki* with variable proportions. It is classified as “*Tridoshika Rasayana*” and is one of the most well-studied Ayurvedic drugs which show its various pharmacological activities. Reason behind being called as *Rasayana* is that it acts as the rejuvenator and immunomodulator, which provides numerous health benefits to any individual.

Materials and Methods: Various references regarding the *triphal*, *rasayana*, and *triphal rasayana* have been gone through verse by verse, especially in *chikitsasthana* of *Charak Samhita* and *Dravya Guna* along with other significant material from relevant resources to get the detailed information regarding them.

Results: Various medicinal attributes of *Triphala rasayana* include antioxidant, anti-cancerous, antidiabetic, antimicrobial, and immunomodulator. Many clinical studies found *Triphala Rasayana* to be effective against diabetes, constipation, and obesity also. Because of the in numerous health benefits of *Triphala rasayana*, Acarya Caraka has mentioned that is any individual practices this recipe continuously for 1 year, he/she would be able to cherish a long life of 100 years, free from ageing and diseases.

Conclusion: *Triphala Rasayana* is recognized as one of the most well-studied *Ayurvedic Rasayanas*. It has been utilized in various traditional medicine systems. Conventionally, *rasayana*-based drugs are utilized in different kinds of diseases. Many clinical studies found *Triphala Rasayana* to be effective against diabetes, constipation, and obesity also. Hence, it can be inferred that *Triphala Rasayana* is a pack of wonders with numerous health benefits which helps in the restoration of all the age groups.

1. INTRODUCTION

Fruits of *Haritaki*, *Vibhitaki*, and *Amalki* are collectively (in variable proportions) known as *Triphala* and are also called *Phalatrika* and *Vara*. *Triphala Rasayana* is made up of two words, “*Triphala*,” that is, (Sanskrit; *tri*=three and *phala*=fruits) is a well-recognized polyherbal medicine consisting of dried fruits of the three plant species *Emblica officinalis* (Family *Euphorbiaceae*), *Terminalia bellerica* (Family *Combretaceae*), and *Terminalia chebula* (Family *Combretaceae*) and “*Rasayana*” it is a broad term which means

those drugs and diets which causes rejuvenation of cells in human body, thereby enhancing the quality of life.^[1] This combination has synergistic properties. *Triphala* is an effective medicine for all three *dosha* specially *kapha* and *pitta*. It is known to cure diabetes, leprosy (all kinds of skin disorders) is beneficial for eyes, increases digestive fire and cure *vishama jwara*.^[2] It is used as a general health promoter, for cosmetics purpose to improve skin and hair quality, and for diabetic wound management. It is considered as good as *rasayana*, which facilitates nourishment to all *dhatu*. *Triphala* is the drug of choice for the treatment of several diseases, especially those of metabolism, dental and skin conditions, and for wound treatment.^[3] It has a very good effect on the health of the eyes and is thought to delay degenerative changes. Variable proportions of three fruits have been mentioned by different *acharyas*, 1:2:4 by some

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acharyas, 1:1:1 by the others.^[4] *Triphala* have useful properties by themselves and by combining them, they give even better results for several health issues. *Triphala* also promotes longevity and overall health and well-being in numerous ways, so it is not confined to people who are predisposed to illnesses. It enhances the digestive process by acting as a digestive tonic that cleanses the digestive organs. Its mild laxative properties (*rechana*) help prevent and cure constipation, general gastrointestinal discomfort, and irritable bowel syndrome. It also improves metabolism, preventing any kind of blockage due to impurities.^[2] Through the *Triphala Rasayana*, that is, rejuvenating properties, it strengthens the immune system. It is rich in antioxidants which help fight against oxidative stress. In this way, it also fights lethargy and fatigue in the body by generating energy and getting rid of the bodily toxins. *Triphala* is rich in health-care properties that can help people manage diabetes and other similar diseases by inhibiting glycolytic enzymes. The presence of tannins, which are polyphenols that bind and precipitate proteins, and the promotion of lower blood glucose levels also inhibit and prevents glycation. In simpler words, it inhibits the digestion and absorption of starch, preventing post-meal hyperglycemia, an excess of sugar in the blood.^[5] Strain because of screen time and pollutants in the air makes our eyes vulnerable to various kinds of diseases and irritation. *Triphala* is rich in Vitamin A, which facilitates the cure and prevention of such problems.^[6] One may regularly use *Triphala churna* juice as an eyewash, but not without the prescription of an ophthalmologist. *Triphala* antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties help heal and prevent dermatological issues such as skin inflammation, redness, acne, oxidative injury, and dryness of skin.^[7] It rebuilds skin protein and keeps moisture, resulting in healthy skin. *Triphala* does wonders for healing wounds as it increases collagen formation and reduces the risk of infection because of harmful bacteria. Rich in Vitamin C because of *Amla*, *Triphala* suits every skin type, eliminating the risk of side effects.^[8] It also has solutions for various kinds of hair problems as well. It can help to reduce hair fall, prevent hair damage and dandruff, unclogs hair follicles, cure and prevent premature hair greying, etc., to attain shinier, softer hair.^[9] *Triphala* has shown anti-arthritis effects in a study on rats, reducing the inflammation caused by arthritis. It may help to combat the breakdown of bone and cartilage in rats with arthritis in the study, as seen with the decrease in levels of bone collagen. High levels of uric acid that leads to painful inflammation of the bone joints cause gout. A study conducted on mice reported a “strong anti-inflammatory effect” against gout in animals. The study showed that *Triphala* might flush out excess uric acid and naturally lower uric acid levels, relieving those having gout.^[10] In several animal and test-tube studies, *Triphala* has been shown to boost antioxidant activity.^[11] *Triphala* can help protect one from stress. It moderates the corticosterone levels as required to help cope with the stress. Corticosterone is also called the stress hormone which helps humans deal with environmental stresses.

1.1. General Properties of *Triphala*^[12]

- *Rasa – Kashaya*
- *Guna – Ruksha, Sara*
- *Virya – Anushna*
- *Vipaka – Madhura*
- *Prabhava – Rasyana*
- *Dosha-Karma – Tridoshagna*
- *Karma – Cakshushya, dipana, vranaropana, ruchikaraka, and medohara.*

The detail description of *Triphala* are given in Table number 1 below.

1.2. Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study was to understand and develop a better understanding regarding the efficacy of *Triphala rasayana* at individual as well as combined level to make its concept well understood. In *Ayurvedic* classics, there is a wide description of *triphala* as well as *rasayana* as individual topics in the variety of diseases. *Ayurveda* aims at alleviation of disease as well as maintaining the health of a healthy person. *Rasayana* plays an important role in the fulfillment of these two aims.

Triphala is a drug widely used in many disorders due to its various pharmacological activities. The formulation generally consists of equal proportions of pericarps of these three myrobalans. *Triphala* has been described in the ancient *Ayurvedic* text as a *Tridoshic Rasavana*, a therapeutic agent with balancing and rejuvenating effects on the three humors or constitutional elements in *Ayurveda vata, pitta, and kapha*.

Haritaki and Vibhitaki have hot potency, while *Amalaki* has cold potency. *Triphala*, being a combination of all three, is therefore balanced, making it useful as an internal cleansing, detoxifying formula. It is regarded as an important *Rasayana* and good purgative in *Ayurvedic* medicine.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

To establish the efficacy of *Triphala Rasayana*, classical texts exploring the *Triphala* as well as *Rasayana* individually have been explored by going through verse by verse. The key ingredients of all four varieties of *Triphala Rasayana* have been studied in detail along with their properties and complimentary nature as that of the other ingredients.

The following are the four rejuvenating formulations of *Triphala Rasayana* mentioned in our classical texts.

2.1. *Triphala Rasayana*

Jarañānte’bhayāmekām prāgbhuktad dve bibhitake bhuktvā tu madhusarpirbhyam catvāryamalakāni ca.

Prayojayan samāmekām triphalaya rasayanam jivedvarśasatam punamajaro’vyadhireva ca. (Ch. Chi-1(3)/41-42)

Along with honey and *ghee*, a person should take the following after the previous meal is digested (i.e., early morning) one *Abhaya (Haritaki)*, two *Vibhitaki* fruits before food, and four *amalaki* fruits after food. A person lives for 100 years free from old age and diseases when administered with *Triphala Rasayana*.^[13]

It is a well-recognized polyherbal medicine consisting of dried fruits of the three plants that are classified as a *tridoshic rasayana* in *Ayurvedic* medicine as it promotes longevity and rejuvenation in patients of all constitutions and ages. Modern experiments have proved that *triphala* is antibacterial and anti-inflammatory as well as analgesic. It can be used successfully in rheumatism, diabetes, digestive disorders, anemia, leucorrhoea, and glandular diseases. Its usefulness has also been proved in liver diseases and in preventing side effects of modern medicines also. Potential uses of *Triphala*, include free radical scavenging, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, immunomodulating, appetite stimulation, gastric hyperacidity reduction, dental caries prevention, antipyretic, analgesic, antibacterial, antimutagenic, wound healing, anticariogenic, anti-stress, adaptogenic, hypoglycemic, anticancer, hepatoprotective, chemoprotective, radioprotective, and

chemopreventive effects. *Triphala* may also promote proper digestion and absorption of food, reduce serum cholesterol levels, improve circulation, relax bile ducts, prevent immunosenescence, maintain homeostasis of the endocrine system, and increase production of red blood cells and hemoglobin.^[2]

2.2. *Triphala Rasayana Dwitiya*

Traiphalenāyasīm pātrīm kalkenalepayannavām tamahoratrikam lepam pibet kṣaudrodakāplutam.

Prabhūtasnehamaśanam jirne tatra praśasyatel ajaro 'ruk samābhyāsājiveccaiva samah śatam. (Ch. Chi-1(3)/42-43).

A new iron vessel should be pasted with the *Triphala kalka* for 24 h. This paste is administered with honey and water. After its digestion, one should take a lot of fat (*Prabhuta Sneha Ashanam*) and the reason behind this is that both *Triphala* and *madhu* have “*ruksha*” *guna* in them which leads to dryness after its intake so to counterbalance its dryness after its digestion, *ghee* or *tila tail* is advised to the patient.^[13]

Using this recipe continuously for 1 year, one can live for 100 years, free from ageing and diseases.

Iron is hailed as an important rejuvenating agent in *Ayurveda*. Coating iron vessel with *Triphala* helps to potentiate it with nano and microparticles of iron. As per *Ayurveda*, the nature of vessel that we use for cooking or storing any substance adds its own medicinal value to the substance. Iron itself is used as an anti-ageing remedy hence aids to the rejuvenation of the body. Among few benefits of iron, it is *madhura*, *amla*, and *tikta* along with its cool potency and *guru guna*. It has *lekhana* property hence can be considered useful in cardiovascular diseases. It improves strength, immunity, skin texture, complexion, memory, intellect, digestive power, and acts as natural aphrodisiac. Along with this, *triphala* comes with its own set of benefits. Briefly, both iron and *triphala* are good for eyes, blood vessels are very good antioxidant, so overall, this combination makes a perfect anti-ageing remedy.

2.3. *Triphala Rasayana Tritiya*

Madhukena tugākṣirya pippalyā kṣaudrasarpiṣāl triphala sitaya capi yuktā siddham rasayanam. (Ch. Chi-1(3)/45).

Triphala mixed with *Madhuka*, *Tugaksheeri*, *Pippali*, Honey, *Ghee*, and Sugar separately in equal proportions is an effective anti-ageing recipe.^[14]

- *Madhuka* has *guru*, *snigdha*, *madhura rasa*, *shita virya* properties, and reduces burning sensation, aphrodisiac, *jivaniya*, *sandhaniya*, *balya*, and is rejuvenating. Hence, it adds to the properties of *Triphala* when used along with it should be used in equal proportion with *Triphala*.^[15]
- *Tugaksheeri* is *madhura*, *kashaya*, *laghu*, *ruksha*, *tikshna*, *balya*, *brimhana*, and *shita virya*, enhances complexion, and is rejuvenating so can be used along with *Triphala* in equal proportion.
- *Pippali* is *tikshna*, *katu*, *snigdha*, *laghu*, *anushna shita*, *madhura vipaka*, and *medya*. It acts as a potent rejuvenator because of *madhura vipaka* itself. It can also be used in equal proportion along with *Triphala*.^[16]
- *Ghrita* and *Madhu* in unequal quantity along with *mishri* can be used with *Triphala* to aid in its property of being a good rejuvenator.^[17]

These ingredients help to improve digestion and metabolism.

These combinations should be used along with *Triphala* in proper quantity and time period to ensure the maximum rejuvenating health benefits from them.

2.4. *Triphala Rasayana Chaturtha*

Sarvalauhahī suvarṇena vacaya madhusarpiṣāl viṅgapippalībhyam ca triphala lavanaena ca.

Samvatsaraprayogena medhāsmṛtibalapradā bhavatyāyuhprada dhanya jarārogaṇibarhaṇī. (Ch. Chi-1(3)/46-47).

Triphala along with *sarva lauha*, *suvarṇa* (gold), *vacha* (*Acorus calamus*), honey, *ghee*, *vidanga* (*Embelia ribes*), *pippali* (*Piper longum*), and *lavana* (Rock salt).

- *Suvarṇa Bhasma* – It is said to be beneficial for *kshaya*, *pandu*, *kasa*, *shukra kshaya*, etc. and hence considered to be the best rejuvenator as it promotes longevity and prevents ageing.
- *Vacha* – It is *katu*, *tikta*, *laghu*, *tikshna*, *ushna*, and *dipana*, increases intellect (*medya*), and reduces pain, piles, etc. It is advised to the children with speech abnormality (*Vaka shakti vardhaka*) and as *Kumara Rasayana*.
- *Madhu-Ghrita* (unequal proportions) can be used with *Triphala* to aid in its property of being a good rejuvenator as they have properties of increasing digestive fire, strength, and enhance the longevity of life etc.
- *Saindhav Lavana* – It is *madhura*, *laghu*, beneficial of eyes, heart, aphrodisiac, alleviates *tridosha*.
- *Pippali* is *tikshna*, *katu*, *snigdha*, *laghu*, *anushna shita*, *madhura vipaka*, and *medya*. It acts as a potent rejuvenator because of *madhura vipaka* itself. It can also be used in equal proportion along with *Triphala*.

The above mixture is administered continually for 1 year to ensure maximum health benefits. It is conducive to the advancement of *medha* (intellect), *smṛti* (memory), *bala* (Strength), *ayu*(longevity), and *dhana* (wealth). It prevents ageing and diseases.

3. DISCUSSION

In *Triphala Rasayana dwitiya*, *Triphala* pasted on the iron vessel has unique properties from its preparation to its mode of action. Food iron is absorbed by the intestinal mucosa from two separate pools of heme and non-heme iron. Heme iron, derived from hemoglobin and myoglobin, is well absorbed and relatively little affected by other foods eaten in the same meal. On the other hand, the absorption of non-heme iron, the major dietary pool, is greatly influenced by meal composition. Ascorbic acid is a powerful enhancer of non-heme iron absorption. The enhancement of iron absorption from vegetable meals is directly proportional to the quantity of ascorbic acid present. Here in this formulation, the *triphala* which is high in Vitamin-C content is smeared over iron vessel and left for 24 h; shows its therapeutic effects because of the principle of enhanced iron absorption in presence of Vitamin-C present in *Triphala*. Several potential uses of *Triphala* include gastric hyperacidity reduction, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, immunomodulating, dental caries prevention, antipyretic, analgesic, antibacterial, wound healing, antistress, hypoglycemic, and hepatoprotective. *Triphala* may also promote hypoglycemic effects, proper digestion, and absorption of food, reduce serum cholesterol levels, improve circulation, relax bile ducts, prevent immunosenescence, maintain homeostasis of the endocrine system, and increase production of red blood cells and hemoglobin. Because of the innumerable health benefits of *Triphala rasayana*, Acarya Caraka has mentioned that is any individual practices this recipe continuously for 1 year; he/she would be able to cherish a long life of 100 years, free from ageing and diseases. In *Triphala Rasayana Tritiya*, it is advised to take *triphala* along with *yashtimadhu*, *tugaksheeri*, and *pippali*.

Yashtimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) mainly pacifies the aggravated/morbid *vata* and *pitta*. Being heavy and unctuous and possessing sweet

taste and post-digestion effect, which are antagonistic to *vata*, hence pacifies it. Similarly, *Yashtimadhu* pacifies the aggravated Pitta due to its sweet taste and post-digestion effect and its cold potency. Good for eye and eyesight/vision, it provides good strength and immunity, good aphrodisiac, and increases the quantity and quality of semen, it heals ulcers, wounds, and swelling/inflammation associated with wounds, it neutralizes the bad effects of poisons and toxins, relieves thirst, relieves tiredness/exhaustion, provides energy, useful in relieving wasting disorders, degenerative diseases, good expectorant, and prevents damage from LDL cholesterol (Bad fat). Enhances immunity by boosting levels of interferon which is the key chemical of the immune system that fights off viruses, it has anti-allergic property and highly beneficial in allergic rhinitis, conjunctivitis, and longevity of life. *Triphala* and *yashtimadhu* complement each other very well. When they are used together, they fill the mutual void.

They are useful together,

- a. To target common organs of both the herbs, more efficiently eyes, hair, stomach, intestines, heart, cholesterol, and anti-aging rejuvenation.
- b. To counter slightly hot net effect of *triphala* with coldness of *yashtimadhu* is told as unctuous by *Bhavaprakasha*. Net effect of triphala is slightly drying, mainly due to astringent taste of *Triphala*.
- c. *Triphala* is *tridoshahara* but more targeted on *kapha* and *pitta*. *Yashtimadhu* being sweet brings in the *vatahara* effect to the equation.
- d. *Triphala* with *yashtimadhu* is especially good for eyes. These two, along with (*Lauha bhasma*), honey and ghee are made into a medicine called *Saptamrita lauha*, which is used for the treatment of a variety of eye disorders.

Similarly, *Tugaksheeri* (*Curcuma augustifolia*) has *madhura rasa*, *laghu*, and *snigdha guna*, *madhura vipaka*, *shita virya*, and have *vata-pitta shamaka* properties. It is *balya* hence improves strength and immunity, *vrishya*, *brimhana*, and *shitala*. It also supports the overall properties of *Triphala* hence acts as *rasayana* together.

Pippali (*P. longum*) has *katu rasa*, *laghu* and *tikshna guna*, *madhura vipaka ushna virya* and balances *vata* and *kapha doshas*. It is very good aphrodisiac and has anti-ageing and rejuvenation properties.

4. CONCLUSION

The wide range of problems shot down by *Triphala* and its side effects may sound overwhelming and daunting to some, but moderate intake of *Triphala*, especially after consultation with a doctor, may soothe your mind and body and become a part of your routine in no time. Research on *Triphala* and its properties is still underway. It is exciting to see what new wonders *Triphala* may present for us. *Triphala Rasayana* is recognized as one of the most well-studied *Ayurvedic Rasayanas*. It has been utilized in various traditional medicine systems. Conventionally, *rasayana*-based drugs are utilized in different kinds of diseases. Various medicinal attributes of *Triphala rasayana* include antioxidant, anti-cancerous, antidiabetic, antimicrobial, and immunomodulator and are considered as a pillar of gastrointestinal treatment specially in functional gastrointestinal disorders and due to its accessible mode of administration, availability, and affordability, there is an increase in its global acceptance. Phytochemical studies chemical constituents include gallic acid, ellagic acid, chebulic acid, and methyl gallate. Many clinical studies found *Triphala Rasayana* to be effective against diabetes, constipation, and obesity also. Hence, it can be inferred that *Triphala Rasayana* is a pack of wonders with

numerous health benefits which helps in the restoration of all the age groups.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

6. AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors give equal contribution while preparing manuscript.

7. FUNDING

Nil.

8. ETHICAL APPROVALS

This study not required ethical clearance as it is review study.

9. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

11. DATA AVAILABILITY

This is an original manuscript and all data are available for only review purposes from principal investigators.

12. PUBLISHERS NOTE

This journal remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published institutional affiliation.

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How to cite this article:

Gangwar A, Yadav SS. Efficacy of Triphala Rasayana – A Review. *IRJAY*. [online] 2023;6(8):27-32.

Available from: <https://irjay.com>

DOI link- <https://doi.org/10.47223/IRJAY.2023.6805>

Table 1: Tabular representation of Triphala is as follows

Name	<i>Haritaki</i>	<i>Vibhitaki</i>	<i>Amalaki</i>
Botanical name	<i>Terminalia chebula</i> Linn.	<i>Terminalia bellerica</i> Roxb	<i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gartn.
Family	Combretaceae	Combretaceae	Euphorbiaceae
Sanskrit names	<i>Haritaki, Abhaya, Pathya, Vayastha, Hemvati, Shiva, and Ayatha</i>	<i>Aksha, Kaliphala, Bhutavasa, Kalidruma, Karnaphala, Kamaphala, and Kaliyugalaya</i>	<i>Amalki, Dhatri, Vayasya, Shivam, Sripkala, Amritaphala, and Tisyaphala</i>
Hindi names	<i>Harre and Harad</i>	<i>Bahera</i>	<i>Awla, Aonla, and Amla</i>
English names	Chebulic Myrobalan	Beleric Myrobalan	Indian Gooseberry
<i>Rasa</i>	<i>Pancharasa except Lavana</i>	<i>Kashaya</i>	<i>Pancharasa except Lavana</i>
<i>Guna</i>	<i>Laghu and Ruksha</i>	<i>Laghu and Ruksha</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, and Shita</i>
<i>Virya</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Shita</i>
<i>Vipaka</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Madhura</i>
Properties	<i>Tridoshagna mainly kapha-pitta shamak, anulomana, dipana chakshushya, hridya, and medya</i>	<i>Tridoshagna mainly kapha shamak, chakshushya, keshya, bhedaka, krimighna, and kasahara</i>	<i>Tridoshagna mainly Pitta Shamaka, vrishya, and chakshushya</i>
Part used	Fruits	Fruits	Fruits
Phytochemicals	Phenolics Saponins Alkaloids and Flavonoids Tannins Glycosides.	Tannins and Glycosides	Terpenes Saponins and Flavonoids Tannins.
Uses	Its fruits are laxative and reported to be used for treating wounds, ulcers, inflammations, gastropathy, flatulence, jaundice, skin diseases, leprosy, intermittent fever, and cardiac disorders. <i>Haritaki</i> forms an important part of <i>Triphala</i> . The fruit pulp is used in dentifrices.	Its bark is used in treating anemia and leukoderma. <i>Vibhitaki</i> forms an important part of <i>Triphala</i> . Fruits are reported to be effective in curing cough, bronchitis, insomnia, dropsy, dyspepsia, flatulence, vomiting, skin diseases, leprosy, fevers, ulcers, and general debility. The mature and dry fruit is constipating in nature and is useful in diarrhea, dysentery, rheumatic, and swellings. The fruit pulp is used in ophthalmia	Its fruits being rich in Vitamin C are extensively used in various formulations of Ayurveda. The fruits are good tonic for general vitality. <i>Amlaki</i> forms an important part of <i>Triphala</i> , and a well-known Ayurvedic medicine for good health and improving body resistance. The fruits either fresh or dried are used as Ayurvedic medicine